

SAVA MEETING SUMMARY: AUGUST 20, 2013

The following is an UNOFFICIAL summary of decisions made by the State Administration and Veterans' Affairs Interim Committee at its August 20, 2013, meeting. The official minutes are the audio/video recordings of the meeting.

- The October 24, 2013, meeting date was moved to October 21, 2013.
- Chairwoman Dee Brown appointed an SJR 14 Subcommittee on Combining Elections. The subcommittee consists of Rep. Bryce Bennett as chairman, Rep. Joanne Blyton, and Rep. Kathy Swanson. The subcommittee's first meeting has been scheduled for September 18, beginning at 9 a.m. in Room 102 of the Capitol.
- Adopted the "mid-size" SJR 14 study plan option (Option B) on combining primary and school elections, but included the Subcommittee from the "SUV" option (Option C) to explore the technical feasibility of combining the elections.
- Adopted the "mid-size" HJR 1 study plan (Option B) concerning the Office of the Commissioner of Political Practices. However, the study will not include examination of whether to replace the Commissioner with a commission or whether to create a new ethics office. In addition to the tasks outlined in the Option B study plan, the study will involve:
 - a survey of how the 49 other states select the officers, boards, or commissions in charge of state lobbying, ethics, and campaign practice laws and of who sets the salaries for these officers, boards, or commissions;
 - an examination of the Office's efficiency in processing and posting online the reports filed with the Office; and
 - how the Office educates candidates about campaign reporting requirements.
- The committee did not voice further objections to PER Board rules concerning the GABA actuarial assumption to be used for the June 30, 2012, valuation of PERS. The Board reported that it had instructed its actuary to project PERS liabilities based on both a 1.5% GABA (current law maximum) and a 3% GABA (the rate in effect prior to the enactment of HB 454, which reduced the GABA for current members and retirees and which might be overturned by a court).
- Sen. Lewis and Sen. Jent were appointed as SAVA's delegation to attend the TRS Board meeting on September 27 and the PER Board meeting on October 10 to listen to the board actuaries present preliminary reports about the systems' funding status.
- Committee members will be requesting further information from the Board of Investments about pension fund investment practices and rates of return for a presentation at the October 21 meeting.

- Committee members will be reviewing pension principles and guidelines adopted by previous SAVA committees and discussing changes at the October 21 meeting.
- The committee withdrew its objection to a Secretary of State rule concerning ballot form and uniformity after the office fixed the rule to more specifically identify where the ballot form guidelines could be found.
- The committee requested data from the Department of Administration about how many patients of the state employee Health Care Clinic have continued to use another primary care provider. This information is to be presented when the Department has enough data to provide this analysis.

For more information on the committee's activities and upcoming meetings, visit the committee's website or contact Sheri Scurr, committee staff.

Committee Website: www.leg.mt.gov/sava
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